



Report Number: TBD

Meeting:

Meeting Date:

## ADMINISTRATIVE INQUIRY

**RE: Review of Victoria Park Police Station Closure**

**Council Member(s):** Jeromy Farkas, Ward 11 Councillor  
Druh Farrell, Ward 7 Councillor

WHEREAS the Calgary Police Service has seen a significant reduction in the number of citizens seeking front-counter services at city police stations;

AND WHEREAS in November 2017, to improve financial and operational efficiencies, the Calgary Police Service closed the last remaining police station in the Centre City (the Victoria Park Police Station), making Calgary the only major municipality in Canada without a downtown police station;

AND WHEREAS following Victoria Park Police Station closure, focus shifted to the use of the Mobile Command Vehicle in order to provide command and logistic support to fill the police presence gap, and overall Police presence in the Centre City increased;

AND WHEREAS Calgary Police Service has released Statistical Overviews focusing on crime in the Centre City, including around the Supervised Consumption Site at the Sheldon Chumir Health Centre in the Beltline;

AND WHEREAS the report validated concerns of residents and businesses in the area and revealed a troubling spike in crime that has occurred in the Centre City in the past two years;

AND WHEREAS Centre City vehicle crime, drug-related calls for service, public violence and break & enters all saw a rate of increase that was disproportionately higher than the rest of the city in 2018.

AND WHEREAS public violence and break & enter crime increased by 35% and 55% respectively in the Centre City, a rate vastly higher than the rest of the city;

AND WHEREAS the loss of a permanent Police Station in the Centre City has meant that people who don't have the means to get to a station outside of a reasonable walking distance or who do not have a phone or internet access cannot reliably access services;

AND WHEREAS the public has not received any retrospective review of the operational decision to close the Victoria Park Police Station;

AND WHEREAS the Calgary Police Service is conducting a Service Optimization Review, including an in-depth review of deployment and shift scheduling of its Patrol Operations division;

AND WHEREAS a safe and vibrant City Centre is essential to the City's social, economic and environmental goals, and tangible to the aforementioned budget deficit;

AND WHEREAS high office vacancy rates and low operational costs make now an ideal time to review whether a "brick and mortar" Police presence would be restored in the City Centre;

AND WHEREAS such restoration may have budget impacts, and it is timely to consider this in advance of Council's One Calgary Budget Deliberations in 2019 November;

**THEREFORE I respectfully request the provision of information at a future meeting of Council, if possible prior to Council's consideration of Adjustments to the One Calgary Service Plans and Budgets on November 25, 2019:**

**1. FROM ADMINISTRATION:**

- a. Are there City of Calgary corporate land and lease-holdings in the Centre City which may be strategically deployed in order to assist the Calgary Police Service in the cost-effective reinstatement of a "brick and mortar" Downtown Police Station?
- b. Are there opportunities for Civic Partners or Wholly Owned Subsidiaries to assist?
- c. Is the City of Calgary incurring costs as a result of the closure of the Victoria Park Police Station Closure?
- d. What are the forecasted policing needs to ensure the success of the Rivers District, considering the approved public investment (Green Line, Event Centre, BMO Expansion) and the anticipated growth of the area?
- e. How much tax revenue does the Beltline and Central Business District generate for the City budget?
- f. Would the reinstatement of a Downtown Police Station assist in Council's strategic priorities and other work, such as execution of Community Action on Mental Health and Addiction?
- g. Are there any other opportunities available, such as through funding sources or in-kind contributions, to assist with the reinstatement of a Downtown Police Station?

**2. FROM COUNCILLORS JYOTI GONDEK AND WARD SUTHERLAND, CALGARY POLICE COMMISSIONERS:**

- a. Why was the Victoria Park Police Station closed?
- b. Will a retrospective review of this closure be conducted and provided for the public?
- c. What are the merits, advantages, disadvantages, challenges, and financial requirements of reinstating a "brick and mortar" Downtown Police Station?
- d. Will the on-going Service Optimization Review consider the reinstatement of a Downtown Police Station? If so, when will this consideration occur and decision be made?
- e. How can City Council help reinstate a Downtown Police Station? Would further assistance from Council, either through in-kind contributions such as land or lease holdings, or budget decisions, assist the business case and meet community needs?
- f. How can the community, educational institutions, charitable and private sectors, help reinstate a Downtown Police Station? Would alternative delivery models for a Downtown Police Station, such as collaboration with local educational institutions, the Urban Alliance, Joint Use Coordinating Committee, Neighbourhood Associations and Business Improvement Areas, and volunteer assistance in staffing, address community needs, meet operational requirements, and be financially viable?
- g. Would advocacy from Council on potential Provincial legislative changes assist in this endeavor?